

Senate Majority Committee Clerks

From: bret schnitzer <bret@schnitzerlaw.net>
Sent: Thursday, August 20, 2015 11:52 AM
To: Senate Majority Committee Clerks
Cc: Bret A Schnitzer; 'Anna Ercoli Schnitzer'
Subject: Solar Panels and Senate Bill 438

Dear Committee,

It has come to our attention that there is a bill in the Senate 438, that is attempting to curtail jobs here in Michigan and derail innovation and clean energy in our State. Interestingly, this bill is being pushed by DTE energy (a monopoly) at the expense of the private sector jobs and the Citizens of this State. A few short years ago DTE in a highly publicized program called "Solar Currents" promoted the idea of Net Metering when it served their purposes. Once they obtained the number of Solar customers they needed to meet the Government regulations they now want to retract the same Net Metering that they promoted on their website and through their public relations department. DTE is running advertising claiming to promote solar power and clean energy they also are attempting to detail it with Senate bill 438. The fact that solar power has actually become competitive and a multimillion dollar industry in Michigan has DTE looking for ways to derail it for their own self interests of staying in power. We all know that Solar power is the way of the future. Progressive Countries and States have all invested in Solar Power. Germany for example which has about the same amount of sunlight per year as Michigan has invested heavily in Solar Power. We are all educated men and I don't need to spell out all the environmental reasons that solar is better than coal. The best way to promote solar power is on individual consumers rooftops.

Let's forget for a moment the environmental impact both financially and as a health concern, of coal as a means of generating electricity and focus solely on our State economy. The jobs that the solar industry is bringing to Michigan are substantial. The argument that Net Metering is somehow making solar energy a subsidy is NOT established. In fact the studies that are out there show the opposite, that net metering is actually beneficial to the utility company because the power is being produced at a local level and is far more efficient than traveling through lines and systems. Even if there was some small subsidy that is how the Government is supposed to operate, to promote more efficient means of power NOT to quash it so that monopolies like DTE can continue to maintain their stronghold on dirty energy in this State. There are maybe 1400 net meter clients in Michigan and this amount is currently insignificant to DTE. Let's NOT forget that the utilities were able to generate around 25 million dollars into false advertising to defeat proposal 3 in 2012. Now they are pushing hard to knock out Net Metering to around 1400 people and future solar installation. The answer is obvious, they want to stay in power and stop innovation in the private sector.

Let's do what is right for the Citizens of our State and our Natural resources and quash Senate bill 438. Senate Bill 438 reeks of special interests and antiquated thinking.

Sincerely,

Bret A. Schnitzer



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